



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

August 27, 2012

Monte Fujishin, District Ranger
Umatilla National Forest
Pomeroy Ranger District
71 W. Main Street
Pomeroy, Washington 99347

Re: EPA Region 10 Review of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the South George Vegetation and Fuels Management Project on the Umatilla National Forest EPA Project Number: 09-001-AFS.

Dear Mr. Fujishin:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for the South George Vegetation and Fuels Management Project. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Clean Air Act § 309 require EPA to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions.

In our April 6, 2012 comments on the draft EIS, we indicated support for the preferred alternative (Alternative B) but encouraged the incorporation of principles related to "ecological forestry." We also encouraged the Forest to incorporate the road decommissioning component from Alternative C into the final preferred alternative. We appreciate the time and attention given to our comments in appendix K of the FEIS, and we are encouraged that the Forest has and will continue to explore the incorporation ecological forestry into its silvicultural prescriptions. We are also pleased to note that the ROD includes our recommended modifications to the preferred alternative, including the decommissioning of approximately 31 miles of system roads and a maintenance level change and seasonal closure of FR 4302. We recognize that the proposed road closure work will be contingent upon the availability of funding, but we believe that the inclusion of this direction maximizes the potential environmental benefit of the project.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this final EIS and ROD. Please feel free to contact me at (206) 553-1601 or by email at reichgott.christine@epa.gov, or you may contact Teresa Kubo of my staff at (503) 326-2859 or by email at kubo.teresa@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christine B. Reichgott".

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit